

# News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Massachusetts Seventh District

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## **REPS. MARKEY AND KING INTRODUCE LANDMARK CIGARETTE FIRE SAFETY ACT**

**Firefighters and Fire Safety Groups Applaud the Move to Save Lives**

**Washington, D.C.** - Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-MA), a Senior Member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, released the following statement on the introducing a bill with Rep. Peter King (R-NY) to implement fire safety standards for cigarettes.

“Today, Congressman Peter King and I introduced the Cigarette Fire Safety Act of 2004. This bipartisan legislation will set a reasonable ignition standard for cigarettes and help to prevent an estimated the 800 deaths, 2,200 injuries and nearly \$560 million dollars in damages caused by cigarette ignited fires every year. It is common knowledge that smoking is considered one of the nation’s leading causes of preventable death, but it’s less widely known that cigarettes are also the leading cause of fatal fires. Both New York state and Canada have passed cigarette fire safety standards that are due to go into effect this summer. However, New Yorkers and Canadians should not be the only ones who are protected from these little torches. Everyone in the United States deserves the same level of protection from fires caused by cigarettes. That is why today I am proposing a bill that requires that the CPSC adopt the New York cigarette fire safety standard as the national standard. Together we can save thousands of lives and prevent the tremendous pain of thousands more burn victims.

Rep. King said, “Each year, cigarette ignited fires needlessly cause hundreds of deaths. We can no longer tolerate losing one more innocent child or putting one more firefighter at risk in a fire that could have been prevented. The Fire Safe Cigarette Act will set standards for cigarettes that will protect and save lives.”

Over twenty years ago, Congressman Joe Moakley, became involved with this issue when a family of seven perished in a fire ignited by a cigarette in his Congressional District. Five children --all under the age of ten--were burned to death along with their parents on Memorial Day Weekend in 1979. His relentless work and effort paved the way for this legislation. Joe Moakley always fought for the little guy – and now some of the littlest guys and girls, our children will be better protected against the dangers of fires that have been caused by cigarettes – that is a great legacy for Joe Moakley.”

This legislation has been endorsed by the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA), the Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI), National Association of State Fire Marshals, The National Volunteer Fire Council, the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the American Lung Association, and the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.”

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